(c) whether the General Secretaries of CPI and CPI(M) had met the Prime Minister recently and submitted a memorandum requesting for the restoration of the strength of army battalions deployed in the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the current year upto December 2, 1998, 145 civilians have been killed in 311 incidents of extremist related violence in Tripura.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The General Secretaries of CPI and CPI(M) met the Prime Minister recently and submitted a memorandum requesting deployment of additional Central Para Military Forsees and army in Tripura. The deployment of Central Forces in States depends upon over all security scenario and the availability of such forces. Accordingly Central Forces, including the Army and Assam Rifles, have been deployed in Tripura keeping in view the overall availability of these forces. The security requirements of the State of Tripura are reviewed constantly. Government of India are fully alive to the security situation in the State.

Regorous Punishment for Sex-abuse

1181. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the ever increasing incidence of crime against women in the country, Government lately propose to provide for more deterrent and rigorous punishments for offence involving sex abuse and chastity of women especially rapes and outraging of modesty including child prostitution; and

(b) if so, the details of the added deterrents contemplated?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) The laws relating to crimes against women, children and other weaker sections of the society are constantly under review and have been amended from time to time to meet the requirements. The Central Government is presently interacting with the State Governments on the question of providing capital punishment for rapists.

Attack on Christian Missions

1182. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY:
DR. B.B. DUTTA:
MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was an attack on a Christian Mission in Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of attacks on Christian Missions in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh during 1997 and 1998; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to safeguard the interests of minorities?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) to (b) Yes, Sir. As per the reports received by the Union Government, in the early hours of September 23, 1998 about 25 miscreants forced their entry into the nunnery situated in the Bhandaria Church Compound, Nawapara, Distt. Jhabua and looted cash (Rs. 25/0,000), valuables and allegedly gang-raped four nuns. A case has been registered at Police Station Kalyan Pur on 23.9.1998 in this connection. Investigations revealed that 24 culprits including 12 Christians tribals were involved and of these 22 culprits have been arrested. Most of the stolen goods have also been recovered.

In another incident, on September 26, 1998, four unidentified persons made an attempt to break open the door of the Catholic Mission at Jamli, PS, Raipura, Distt. Jhabua. They cut off the telephone lines, damaged the lights and also demanded money, but escaped on arrival

of some neighbours. Police has registered a criminal case in this connection.

(c):

	1997	1998
Gujarat	0	5
Madhya Pradesh	0	2

(d) Although 'Public Order' and 'Police' are State subjects a per the Constitution of India and it is the primary responsibility of the State Governments to prevent crimes, the Central Government has been providing assistance to the State Governments for improving their policing infrastructure and also shares intelligence with the States. It has also constituted a Special Force, called the Rapid Action Force, for assisting the State Governments in controlling the communal situation. The Central Government has been issuing guidelines from time to time to the State Governments for promoting communal harmony among different communities. The guidelines are reviewed periodically.

The Government is clear that acts of violence against the minority communities whenever and in whatever form they occur, must be dealt with sternly and the culprits punished.

Chief Ministers' Conference on Human Rights

1183. SHRI SITARAM KESRI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have convened a conference of the State Chief Minister of Human Rights;

(b) if so, the purpose, the dates of the conference and its agenda; and

(c) the response of Chief Ministers to his invitation?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) to (c) No, Sir. However, the Government had convened a meeting of Ministers responsible for Human Rights in States and Union Territories to discuss certain issues such as setting up of State Human Rights Commissions, Human Rights Courts and to promote human rights literacy amongst various sections of the society. The meeting was postponed due to administrative reasons.

Atrocities on Minorities

1184. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the continued atrocities on minority communities by religious fundamentalists in the country specially in Gujarat which include rape, demolition of religious sites, attacks on gatherings before mute police forces; and

(b) if so, what preventive actions were taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) It is not correct that there have been continued atrocities on minority communities in Gujarat. However, a few isolated incidents of alleged atrocities/attack on Christians and their Institutions in Gujarat and other parts of the country have come to the notice of the Government. Promot action has been taken in these cases by the authorities.

(b) Although 'Public Order' and 'police' are State Subjects as per the Constitution of India and it is the primary responsibility of the State Governments to prevent crimes, the Central Government has been providing assistance to the State Governments for improving their policing infrastructure and also shares intelligence with the States. It has also constituted a Special Force, called the Rapid action Force, for assisting the State Governments in controlling the communal situation. The Central Government has been issuing guidelines from time to time to the State Governments for promoting communal harmony among different communities. The guidelines are reviewed periodically.